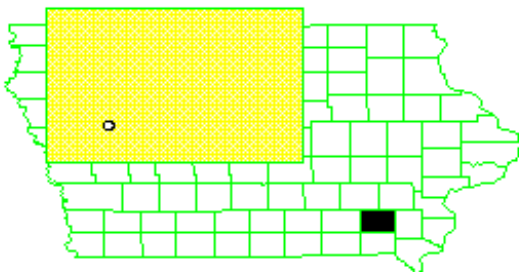


**FAIRFIELD COAL
GASIFICATION PLANT**
IOWA
EPA ID# IAD981124167

EPA Region 7
City: Fairfield
County: Jefferson County
Other Names:



SITE DESCRIPTION

The Fairfield Coal Gasification Plant site occupies one city block between West Burlington and West Washington Avenues in Fairfield. The plant produced a natural gas substitute from coal from 1878 to 1950. The plant has been owned and operated by Iowa Electric Light and Power since 1917. Since 1950, the utility has used the site as an operations facility. The main wastes are polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs), which are found in the coal tar left over from the gasification process, and cyanide salts left in the iron oxide waste produced when the gas is purified. Operators sold some of the coal tar and buried some in an earthen pit on the site or dumped it in a nearby ditch. Disposal methods for the iron- cyanide waste are unknown, but it also may have been dumped on site. In 1985, the utility found that groundwater near the site was contaminated. The utility began a monitoring program to assure that private wells were unaffected. The EPA became involved in 1987 by conducting an expanded site investigation, installing and sampling on- and off-site monitoring wells, and conducting surface and subsurface soil sampling. In 1989, Iowa Electric found that the foundation for a gas holder was the main source of the groundwater contamination. The gas holder was removed and destroyed in the 1950s, and wastes were dumped or left in its place. An estimated 1,000 people live within 1 mile of the site; 9,000 live within 3 miles. The local drinking water supply depends on both surface water and groundwater, and serves 11,000 people. There are 23 drinking water wells within a 3-mile radius of the site; the closest is 1,900 feet away. Shallow and deep groundwater wells are within 2 miles of the site. The closest well uses the shallow aquifer. Cedar Creek is less than 3 miles downslope of the site and is used for recreation.

Site Responsibility:

This site was addressed through Federal, State, and potentially responsible parties' actions.

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 06/24/88

Final Date:	08/30/90
Deleted Date:	

THREATS AND CONTAMINANTS

In 1985, the utility detected PAHs, including anthracene and pyrene from the coal gasification processes, in the groundwater near the site. On-site groundwater and soil contained VOCs such as benzene, toluene, and xylene, the metals lead and mercury, and cyanide salts. Direct contact with contaminated soil and groundwater could pose a risk to public health.

CLEANUP APPROACH

Response Action Status

Emergency Actions: Under EPA supervision, the utility undertook an emergency cleanup action, installing a groundwater extraction system to contain and treat the contaminated groundwater.

Groundwater and Soil: Also under the EPA's guidance, the utility completed an intensive study of groundwater and soil contamination at the site in 1990. The remedy selected included excavating and incinerating contaminated soil and source areas, continuing the groundwater extraction and treatment system, and conducting a pilot study for possible in-place bioremediation of the contaminated groundwater. The potentially responsible party completed the design of the remedy in June 1992 and began excavation in June 1993. The bioremediation pilot study proved ineffective and was terminated in May 1993. The groundwater extraction system achieved health-based standards set by the EPA and the State in early 1993 and was shut down. The excavation of contaminated soil and coal tar was completed by the potentially responsible party in May 1995.

Site Facts: In 1989, Iowa Electric signed an Administrative Order on Consent with the EPA to conduct additional site investigations. The Utility signed a Consent Decree with the EPA in March 1991 to perform the technical design and undertake site cleanup activities.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRESS



All known source material and contaminated soil has been removed from the site and has undergone treatment using thermal destruction technology. Iowa Electric has merged with other electric utilities to become Alliant Energy Incorporated. They continue to successfully operate a long-term remedial action consisting of groundwater collection and treatment.

SITE REPOSITORY



Fairfield Public Library, Court &
Washington, Fairfield, IA 52556

Superfund Records Center
901 N. 5th St.
Kansas City, KS 66101
Mail Stop SUPR
(913)551-4038

REGIONAL CONTACTS

SITE MANAGER:

Bruce Morrison

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

morrison.bruce@epa.gov.
(913) 551-7755

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

COORDINATOR:

PHONE NUMBER:

PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER:

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

STATE CONTACT:

Mic Leat

PHONE NUMBER:

515-281-8045

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

STATE:

IA

07BX

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

03

EPA ORGANIZATION:

SFD-SUPR/EFLR

MODIFICATIONS